The Yeoh Tiong Lay Centre for Politics, Philosophy & Law
ANNUAL REPORT
2017–18

Ranked first in the UK for research
# The Yeoh Tiong Lay Centre for Politics, Philosophy & Law

## ANNUAL REPORT

### 2017–18

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Executive Dean’s welcome message
Professor Gillian Douglas FBA

I am delighted to introduce this year’s annual report on the Yeoh family’s generous support of King’s College London. Both the Yeoh Tiong Lay (YTL) Centre for Politics, Philosophy & Law and the YTL LLM Scholarship programme continue to achieve wonderful results within The Dickson Poon School of Law.

As well as delivering world-leading research in the field of politics, philosophy and law, the YTL Centre continues to deliver excellent events. I personally attended the YTL Symposium on Human Rights and Political Wrongs, featuring Sir Noel Malcolm’s controversial new book, and the Hon Michael Kirby’s presentation at the symposium on Global Health Justice. Both well-supported events were stimulating explorations of key issues which provoked lively contributions from the audience.

I am also pleased to announce that the YTL LLM Scholarship has been extended for another year, in the light of having been such a success. Therefore, while the 2017–18 Scholars were the last funded by the Yeoh family gift, we will also be welcoming in three new YTL LLM Scholars in 2018–19. These Scholarships will be funded partly by the underspend from previous years of the gift, and partly by additional funds that The Dickson Poon School of Law has been able to raise. Updates from all seven Scholars can be found on pages 14 to 19 of this report.

Support from the Yeoh family has enabled King’s to take its place at the very top of legal academia and higher education. Both the YTL Centre and the YTL LLM Scholarships help The Dickson Poon School of Law to excel by offering a provision many other law schools cannot. This report aims to convey the impact that the Yeoh family’s generosity has had over the last academic year. I would like to thank the Yeoh family once again for their transformative support of our School.

Professor Gillian Douglas FBA
Executive Dean of The Dickson Poon School of Law

‘Support from the Yeoh family has enabled King’s to take its place at the very top of legal academia and higher education.’
Introduction from the Director of the YTL Centre for Politics, Philosophy & Law

Professor John Tasioulas

I write at the conclusion of what is clearly the YTL Centre’s most successful year of operation since its inception in 2014. I have already written in previous newsletters about a range of activities held earlier in the year, including the Law & Justice Forum on rogue states, a symposium on global health justice, and events related to new books by Professor Michael Ignatieff and Sir Noel Malcolm. These were supplemented towards the latter part of the year by a flurry of additional activities.

Without doubt the most important event was the Law & Justice Forum on human rights and non-state actors, which took place on 1 June. The forum focused on the role of non-state actors – in particular, international organisations, human rights tribunals (courts and treaty bodies), corporations, and non-governmental organisations – in human rights law and policy. One of the notable features of the contemporary human rights scene is that the statist assumption – that human rights obligations fall exclusively or predominantly on states – has increasingly come under strain due to phenomena such as economic globalisation, failed states, the emergence of powerful corporations operating across borders, and populist and authoritarian movements hostile to human rights. This means that more of the burden of ensuring compliance with human rights roles of international organisations could not be straightforwardly extrapolated from those of states; and Dr Anna Neistat (Amnesty International), who gave a vivid account of many of the challenges confronting non-governmental organisations in advancing human rights across the globe, especially in contexts in which human rights have limited grassroots support. The day’s discussions were rounded off by an evening panel chaired by Bridget Kendall, former BBC senior foreign correspondent and currently Master of Peterhouse college, Cambridge. As the main organiser of this event, I especially wish to thank my King’s colleagues Professor Guglielmo Verdirame and Dr Philippa Webb for their help and support with this event.

‘The Centre also achieved very gratifying success in this year’s round of academic promotions, with Dr Massimo Renzo being promoted to a professorship and Dr Christoph Kletzer being promoted to a readership.’

Two other events should also be mentioned. The first was the launch of Adam Etinson’s edited volume Human Rights: Moral or Political? (OUP, 2018) with a panel that included Adam, Baroness Onora O’Neill, Dr Anna Neistat and Professor Gerald Neuman. The papers in Dr Adam Etinson’s book, which include a response by me to Samuel Moyn, as well as papers by other King’s colleagues (Joseph Raz and Andrea Sangiovanni), offer a cutting-edge exploration of some of the key issues in contemporary human rights theory. They take as their central context and in a subtle analysis showed that the human rights roles of international organisations could not be straightforwardly extrapolated from those of states; and Dr Anna Neistat (Amnesty International), who gave a vivid account of many of the challenges confronting non-governmental organisations in advancing human rights across the globe, especially in contexts in which human rights have limited grassroots support. The day’s discussions were rounded off by an evening panel chaired by Bridget Kendall, former BBC senior foreign correspondent and currently Master of Peterhouse college, Cambridge. As the main organiser of this event, I especially wish to thank my King’s colleagues Professor Guglielmo Verdirame and Dr Philippa Webb for their help and support with this event.

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The YTL Centre continues to be a hub for excellence in research. Here, each of the Centre’s academic staff gives a brief summary of the research projects and publications that they have been working on over the past academic year.

**Professor John Tasioulas**
Director of the YTL Centre for Politics, Philosophy & Law

Professor Tasioulas’ two reports written as a consultant for the World Bank, and supported by the Nordic Trust Fund, were published by the World Bank in January. So far, they have received combined downloads in excess of 2,000.

The first report, ‘Minimum Core Obligations: Human Rights in the Here and Now’, explains the idea of the ‘minimum core obligations’ associated with economic, social and cultural human rights – obligations that must be immediately realised by all states, as opposed to obligations that may be progressively realised over time. The second report, ‘The Minimum Core of the Human Right to Health’, explores the idea of minimum core obligations in relation to the human right to health, drawing on international law, as well as regional and domestic legal systems. It argues that the minimum core obligations associated with the right to health can help us better advance the Sustainable Development Goals concerned with health – especially when it comes to questions of prioritisation in relation to scarce health resources. In June this year, Professor Tasioulas’ reports were the subject of an online symposium featuring commentators including distinguished figures from law, philosophy and development economics, such as Justice Kirby, Professor Martha Nussbaum (University of Chicago) and Professor Sakiko Fukuda-Parr (The New School, USA).

Professor Tasioulas published two articles this year: ‘Exiting the Hall of Mirrors: Morality and Law in Human Rights’, in K Bourne and T Campbell (eds) Political and Legal Approaches to Human Rights (Routledge, 2018), as well as ‘Philosophising the Real World of Human Rights: A Reply to Samuel Moyn’, in A Etinson (ed) Human Rights: Moral or Political? (OUP, 2018). He also wrote a blog post ‘Feeling our Way: Human Rights as Democratic Beliefs’ for the Judicial Power Project in March 2018. He also completed editing The Cambridge Companion to the Philosophy of Law, which is due for publication next year, and will include a chapter by him on the Rule of Law.

Early in the year, Professor Tasioulas gave talks at the Colloquium in Legal and Political Philosophy at Queen’s University in Kingston, Canada, and at a conference on the right to a dignified human existence at the University of Potsdam, Germany. In April, he gave the inaugural annual lecture on human rights at the University of São Paulo in Brazil. He also gave various talks at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, and in June gave a talk on the ethics of robots and AI to the joint King’s/Queen’s symposium on legal philosophy. Finally, in July he delivered the keynote lecture at the Human Rights Under Pressure programme in Berlin, Germany – a joint venture of the Free University of Berlin and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Professor Tasioulas was also reappointed as Honorary Professorial Fellow at the University of Melbourne Law School and was part of a successful bid to the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) for a £643,298 grant for the project ‘DADD: Discovering and Attesting Digital Discrimination’, along with colleagues from the Department of Computer Science.
Professor Massimo Renzo
Professor of Politics, Philosophy & Law

Professor Renzo, promoted from Reader to Professor in the past year in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Centre since 2015, completed three research articles, now under review, on the value of political self-determination in 2017–18. He has also started working on a new project on consent and the value of personal autonomy.

Professor Renzo’s paper ‘Political Authority and Unjust Wars’, discussing how the ‘just war theory’ is currently dominated by two positions, appeared in Philosophy and Phenomenological Research. According to the orthodox view (Walzer), provided that jus in bello principles are respected, combatants have an equal right to fight, regardless of the justice of the cause pursued by their state. According to revisionists (McMahan, Fabre), whenever combatants lack reasons to believe that the war they are ordered to fight is just, their duty is to disobey. Professor Renzo argues that, when members of a legitimate state acting in good faith are ordered to fight, they acquire a pro tanto obligation to obey that does not depend for its validity on the justice of the cause being pursued. However, when the war is unjust, this obligation may be overridden, under certain conditions, by the obligation not to contribute to the unjustified killing of innocents. This is because (contra Raz) the pro tanto force of the duty to obey the law is best understood in terms of ‘presumptive’ rather than ‘exclusionary’ reasons for action. This approach captures the insights of both the orthodox and the revisionist view, while avoiding the problems that afflict each of them.

Professor Renzo has also been awarded three research fellowships this year: the PC Woo Fellowship (£6,000) to visit the National University of Singapore (NUS); the Research School of Social Sciences Fellowship (£2,000) to visit the School of Philosophy at the Australian National University (ANU), one of the top philosophy programmes in the world; and the King's Undergraduate Research Fellowship (£1,250), which will provide him with research assistance for a project on manipulation, fake news and election interference.

He has given talks at a number of departmental seminars, including at the Centre for Ethics, Law and Public Affairs at the University of Warwick, the Centre for Ethics and Metaethics at the University of Leeds, the Centre for Legal Theory at NUS and the Centre for Moral, Social and Political Theory at ANU. He was also a speaker at a conference entitled ‘The public uses of coercion and force: From constitutionalism to war’ at the University of Amsterdam; at a conference in honour of John Gardner, Professor of Law and Philosophy at the University of Oxford; and at a workshop on consent at the University of Cambridge, aimed at bringing together philosophers and policymakers.

Professor Renzo attended the Annual Conference of the Society for Applied Philosophy in Utrecht, the Netherlands, where he presented some of his recent work on the value of personal autonomy. He also co-organised a workshop entitled ‘Responsibility in War’ in collaboration with the University of Stockholm, bringing together a number of high-profile speakers, including Professor Derek Pereboom (Cornell University), Professor Dana Nelkin (University of California, San Diego, USA), Professor Helen Beebee (University of Manchester) and Dr Carolina Sartorio (University of Arizona, USA). The workshop will take place in Seville in September 2018. As a member of the Core Research group of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)-funded project entitled ‘Cultural Heritage in War’, led by Helen Frowe (University of Stockholm) and Derek Matravers (Open University), Professor Renzo also organised a meeting for the project at King’s to bring together its members.
Dr Ashwini Vasanthakumar

Lecturer

At the beginning of the year, Dr Vasanthakumar spoke at the Free University of Berlin; the Institute for Futures Studies (Stockholm), where she is a researcher; the American Philosophical Association Annual Convention (Central Meeting) in Chicago (USA); and the National University of Singapore. Dr Vasanthakumar also delivered a keynote lecture at Uppsala University (Sweden), where she was Visiting Forum Fellow; a workshop for the UK-Latin America Network for Political Philosophy in Mexico City; and a keynote lecture at the Open Minds XIII conference in Manchester.

Dr Vasanthakumar published her manuscript, *The Ethics of Exile: A Political Theory of Diaspora*, with Oxford University Press. The book is the first systematic treatment of exile politics in normative political theory and explores the relationship between exile communities and their homelands. In addition, her article ‘Privatising Border Control’ was published in the *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*. Dr Vasanthakumar will also be contributing a chapter that develops this article to the *Cambridge Handbook on Privatisation*, which is under preparation.

Dr Vasanthakumar left King’s at the end of July and returned to Canada, her home country, where she joined Queen’s Law School as the Queen’s National Scholar in Legal and Political Philosophy. She said: ‘It is with no small regret that I leave the YTL Centre. It is home to a vibrant intellectual and professional community of brilliant and engaged scholars, and I have learnt a tremendous amount from them. The Centre is a real hub of activity at The Dickson Poon School of Law, and brings a great deal of energy to the broader scholarly community in London. As such, I have been privileged to engage with a number of prominent thinkers on a range of pressing and complex topics, and have grown as a scholar. The vibrancy of the Centre would not be possible without the generosity of the Yeoh family and the vision of its members, Professor John Tasioulas, Dr Christoph Kletzer, and Professor Massimo Renzo.’

Clockwise from top: Panelists at the Law & Justice Forum in June 2018; Dr Vasanthakumar at a YTL event; Professor Tasioulas with Professor Helmut Aust, Free University of Berlin
Innovative teaching

The YTL Centre’s teaching continues to offer students the opportunity to study politics, philosophy and law. Working across these three disciplines allows our students and academics to approach problems in society from a fresh perspective, leading to different questions being asked and important answers being found.

The Politics, Philosophy & Law (PPL) LLB

In 2017–18, the PPL programme had 275 applicants, which resulted in 31 enrolments. After years of rising demand, the growth of the PPL programme has slowed down slightly, but this was within the band of regular fluctuation. Feedback from students continued to be positive and the Centre expects further rises in the intake in coming years.

Winner of the Jelf Medal – Nicolas Schuscheim

We are delighted to report that Nicolas Schuscheim, a PPL student, is the winner of The Dickson Poon School of Law’s Jelf Medal 2018–19.

The Jelf Medal was created in honour of Reverend Richard Jelf, who retired from the role of Principal of King’s in 1868 after holding this office for 24 years. The Medal commemorates his services to the university. One Jelf Medal is awarded to a student in each of the faculties at King’s.

Nicolas demonstrated outstanding academic ability, obtaining an array of first-class marks during his studies at King’s and finishing as the top student in the PPL programme graduating class of 2018. On top of his academic prowess, he has been an active participant in the life of the School. He held a King’s Undergraduate Research Fellowship (KURF) with Professor Tanya Aplin, in which he conducted a wide-ranging literature review of the theory underpinning criminalisation of intellectual property (IP) infringement. He built on this fellowship to undertake his own independent research and writing for the undergraduate research module, Advanced Topics in IP Law, in which he scored a first.

During his third year of study, Nicolas achieved:

- Six Pump Court Chambers prize for outstanding results in Advanced Constitution Law
- Bird & Bird Prize in Intellectual Property Law

Nicolas has also been an active member of the Law School student community, serving on the School’s student–staff liaison committee for two years, and training as a peer supporter with the university’s peer support team. Through both positions he has lent his support to enhancing the student experience for both his peers and future generations, demonstrating kindness and consideration for those around him.

Finally, Nicolas has been an active member of the King’s Information Technology and Intellectual Property Law Society (KIIPS) (which is student-run), attending and helping to organise various events. He is someone who combines academic excellence and enthusiastic engagement with the wider activities of the School. The YTL Centre is proud to have such an outstanding student within our ranks.
I take this opportunity to express my utmost gratitude for having the privilege to be one of the candidates elected for the YTL Scholarship. Being able to benefit from the Scholarship represented an unprecedented level of support that enabled me to realise I am better suited to pursuing a career in the area of international financial law than dispute resolution, as previously intended. Without the Scholarship, my financial situation would not have allowed me to do so. Consequently, I can wholeheartedly say that benefiting from the YTL Scholarship represented a life-changing opportunity for me.

During the academic year I have gained significant knowledge of the financial legal system, which has enabled me to acquire an outstanding academic result during the LLM. Moreover, I can proudly state that I have achieved outstanding academic results during the LLM and am on course to achieve a first-class degree. This would not have been possible without the financial support offered by the Yeoh family, as studying and working at the same time usually has a negative impact upon one’s academic performance.

Currently, I am in the process of applying for various legal positions with investment banks, asset management firms and hedge funds, and I am confident that soon I will be able to apply in practice the outstanding academic knowledge acquired during the LLM. The Yeoh family’s generosity and interest in providing financial support to students is to be praised. Thank you.

I have interacted with outstanding academics and professionals as well as future legal practitioners, which has allowed me to develop life-long friendships that might also be of assistance in my future legal career.

The YTL Scholarship enabled me not only to learn about a specialised law area I was very curious about, but also to do so in a highly stimulating way. The enthusiasm of the professors and their willingness to pass on their passion makes the learning unique.

I am really happy with the choice of my modules, mostly in the fast-moving information law area. I had the opportunity, among other peers, to participate in an interactive seminar at the EU Commission (DG Connect) in Brussels to discuss the recent and future developments relating to the EU digital single market. This special event was led by Professor Kevin Madders and Adam Watson-Brown. When I think about it, the ease with which we followed and engaged in cutting-edge legal conversations is a major achievement the LLM has brought us.

I am also delighted about my current dissertation subject matter. Meeting with my supervisor Dr Nóra Ni Loideain and discussing with her the extra-territoriality issues of the GDPR was fascinating. I am about to add some insights from the UK data protection regulator – the Information Commissioner’s Office – in an attempt to bring my research paper closer to practical reality. The impressive Maughan Library with its extensive legal materials makes it a great place to finish the writing up of my paper.

After the LLM, I will work for an English law firm in Paris, which specialises in worldwide data privacy compliance programmes. The skills and experience I gained during the LLM will allow me to be well prepared for the professional world and to flourish rapidly. In such an evolving and even disrupting world, I am eagerly waiting to face tomorrow’s new legal challenges.

I am extremely grateful of the Yeoh family for their support and for making the Scholarships possible.
Margarita Amaxopoulou  
Greece

The YTL LLM Scholarship has supported me immensely throughout my studies at King's. Continuing my studies to a postgraduate level was a dream, which I passionately pursued throughout my undergraduate studies. Although I graduated from the school of law in Greece as the valedictorian of my year, my parents told me that our family did not have the adequate monies to fund my postgraduate studies. Aside from giving me the opportunity to study the LLM, the Yeoh family's support also helped me to fully concentrate on my studies. The breadth and depth of the School's curriculum allowed me to choose modules I was truly keen on learning more about. While following the unique transnational law pathway I got more and more excited every time I came across materials and concepts I had never heard of. The kind help from and fruitful discussions I had with the academics motivated me to engage even more with the reading lists and the tasks I had to accomplish in each module. Through this process, I broadened my understanding of complex legal and policy problems, I delved into critical thinking and I gained valuable analytical skills.

This endeavour, of course, was not all plain sailing. The programme was very challenging and required many hours of hard work, requiring both patience and persistence. The Scholarship enabled me to have a clear mind and not to worry about financial issues. It kept me calm and allowed me to concentrate on my studies. This was crucial for me on a personal level too. For instance, I upgraded my debating skills and acquired important organisational skills as a member of the LLM Research Conference in Transnational Law. My active participation in it boosted my confidence in public speaking. The effort that the programme required throughout the year made me perform beyond my expectations and the fact that I achieved more than I thought I could a year ago gave me a sense of complete fulfilment.

In the middle of the year, I received the great news that an application I had submitted for the MPhil/PhD (Law Research) programme at The Dickson Poon School of Law was successful. Throughout my effort of trying to secure funding for the next year it was the YTL Scholarship that gave me the courage and hope that I would manage to find a solution. Indeed, in the late spring I was informed that I was the recipient of the Professor Anthony Guest PhD Scholarship 2018, a law research scholarship offered by The Dickson Poon School of Law. So, I am starting a research degree in September and I could not be more excited about it. I believe that the Yeoh family's support was the crucial element that allowed me to acquire the necessary cognitive and methodological 'tools' I needed to lay the foundations for the path I always wanted to follow in academia. This life-changing experience was truly inspiring for me. Thanks to the gift I received I was able to take stable and confident steps forward and see myself changing for the better. I learnt the value of supporting other people and how providing some help can be a tremendous boost in other people's lives. Motivated by this realisation, I am committed to giving the best support I can, both to my colleagues and my potential students. Either by volunteering, giving talks or organising workshops and conferences, I will try to contribute to creating forums where anyone can participate without being afraid to expose themselves. I aspire to be there to listen and encourage everyone who passionately tries to keep striving for excellence despite any obstacles that may be keeping them in fear. I don't know if I will manage to become a great teacher, but this will be the fulfilment of the promise I gave to myself; by helping these people, I will see my younger self being helped.

For all these reasons, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Yeoh family. Their generosity allowed me to follow my dreams and pursue the LLM at King's. I could not be more grateful for the opportunities that this support has provided me; thanks to this generosity, I have not only made the most of the LLM experience but I will be pursuing a research degree in the forthcoming academic year. I will never forget the generosity and I hope that one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals just as you did for me.

Janice Pui  
Malaysia

I am extremely grateful to have been awarded the YTL LLM Scholarship as it provided me with the opportunity to pursue the LLM programme at my alma mater. Having thoroughly enjoyed the three years I spent at King’s during my LLB programme, I am pleased to share that I have had the same experience for the LLM programme. King’s creates a vibrant environment for learning and promotes excellence in its students. I am privileged to have been taught by senior academics with a strong practitioner background, each of whom was passionate and willing to share their knowledge with us. In particular, I have enjoyed the academic discussions with my peers, which often extended beyond the standard curriculum. This allowed me to explore complex concepts and deepen my understanding of the subject matter.

I undertook the LLM programme specialising in international financial law. Besides learning about the operation of the various types of financial instruments in the global financial system and private equity transactions, I also embarked on research on green bonds as part of my dissertation. Green bonds, being debt instruments whose proceeds are specifically earmarked for environmentally friendly projects, are of growing importance as they help raise funds for climate change mitigation. My research focuses on the issue of greenwashing and potential legal solutions for this problem.

On a separate note, I am happy to share that I gained four distinctions out of the five modules that I undertook. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my tutors, who have made this rigorous academic journey enjoyable and a memorable one. As I was previously practising as a commercial lawyer in Singapore, I also took the opportunity to complete the examinations of the Qualified Lawyers Transfer Scheme. I will be admitted to practise as a solicitor in England and Wales and I hope that being a dual-qualified lawyer will provide me with more exciting opportunities in this increasingly global legal landscape. I am thankful for the friendships forged, and the academic experience has benefited me tremendously in preparing myself for my professional career as a solicitor. I hope that I will be able to contribute to my alma mater in the future.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Yeoh family. Thank you for your generosity, which allowed me to follow my dreams and pursue the LLM at King’s.’

‘King’s creates a vibrant environment for learning and promotes excellence in its students.’
Elaine Koh
Malaysia

The Dickson Poon School of Law has always been an ideal institution for me to further my studies. The various specialist courses catered for students indicate the expertise and excellence this institution is best known for. The LLM programme is designed to enhance students’ knowledge of law and improve our problem-solving skills. Therefore, in choosing King’s, I am confident that I will have the best academic experience and the opportunity to enhance my knowledge and skills. This Scholarship presents a golden opportunity for me to pursue the LLM as I ultimately wish to use this postgraduate experience to mentor and support individuals who come from any background. I am a firm believer that, through education and knowledge, lives can be changed; mine has. At the age of 13, I helped my father run his daily business of selling bak kut teh (pork stew), a traditional Malaysian dish. We faced numerous challenges over the years. It was at that point when I became fully aware that being educated would not only give me the opportunity to make a difference on a personal level but also to help people like myself who are less privileged.

With the help of this Scholarship, I will be able to complete my master’s. The use of this qualification will only be optimised if it is shared by imparting what I have learnt to the future generation. I believe that the degree will indeed serve as a source of motivation and empowerment to the future generation.

This Scholarship is both an encouragement and a blessing, enabling me to pursue my LLM at King’s. I am a practising lawyer who has a passion for teaching. With this Scholarship, I will be able to enhance my knowledge in order to be a better lawyer and teacher. This financial assistance will be of great help as it will reduce my worries in terms of paying for tuition fees and living costs. Ultimately, it will allow me to perform better academically.

The Yeoh family’s generosity has inspired me to help others and give back to the community. I hope one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals and dreams just as they have helped me.

Iryna Cheleyshava
Belarus

I am a graduate of Belarusian State University, where I obtained a first-class honours bachelor’s degree in International Law with a major in International Private Law. During my studies I also participated in an exchange programme in International Law at the University of Łódź (Poland).

I have chosen the LLM at King’s as this programme will definitely give me knowledge and experience that is essential for my career. Initially, during my volunteering experience abroad, I had a chance to meet King’s alumni and hear their truly enthusiastic evaluations of this programme. Also, this programme is designed for those who intend to work on legal practice in innovation industries. It will therefore fit my professional needs, enriching me with problem-solving skills in a transnational context, and I look forward to hearing the experiences of prominent researchers such as Professors Tanya Aplin and John Phillips. This is crucial for me, as I am keen to focus on research during my master’s.

In particular, I am interested in legal regulation technologies, on which I have already started work that I am keen to continue for my master’s dissertation.

I am delighted to be a YTL Scholar as it gives me a unique opportunity to study at a world-leading university and commit myself to research in law that would not otherwise be possible for me as a student from a developing country. Being a recipient of the YTL Scholarship is a life experience that I am going to exploit to the fullest extent. I will devote my time at King’s to researching in information and IP law in order to come up with answers to newly arising questions of digital society.

Thanks to the Yeoh family’s generosity, I received a unique chance to study at one of the best law schools in the world and realise the goal of my life. I always looked to be a person who can both influence and promote changes in society and work at a law firm in my home country, Belarus. My studies gave me a vision of this influence and the mission of my life. I plan to become a highly qualified lawyer with expertise in IP law, and actively participate in the reform of the legal regulation of technologies and IP both at national and international levels.

The YTL LLM Scholarship will make this possible for me, given that as a developing country student my resources are extremely limited. As a Scholarship holder, I am committed to working extremely hard during the programme, with full dedication and concentration to reward the investment of the Yeoh family in my studies.

Melissa Ozer
Australia

I am an Australian citizen and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Laws degree from Monash University in Melbourne in 2015. I completed my Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice and was admitted to the Supreme Court of Victoria as an Australian lawyer in 2016. I have worked in various positions within the Australian Government, most recently as a legal associate to a judge at the Family Court of Australia. I chose to study my master’s at King’s as I believe it has exceptional staff and an innovative teaching style, which will push me to realise my intellectual potential, as well as offer me more practical and real-world experiences.

As an Australian, I am particularly keen to develop the transnational aspects of my knowledge and am excited to study at one of the best law schools in the world, located in a truly global city.

I am deeply grateful to the Yeoh family for providing me with the opportunity to further my legal education with such a generous gift. Receiving the YTL Scholarship is an honour and will greatly assist me with the costs associated with studying and relocating.

‘Receiving the YTL Scholarship is an honour and will greatly assist me with the costs associated with studying and relocating.’

‘This financial assistance will be of great help as it will reduce my worries in terms of paying for tuition fees and living costs. Ultimately, it will allow me to perform better academically.’

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‘Thanks to the Yeoh family’s generosity, I received a unique chance to study at one of the best law schools in the world and realise the goal of my life.’
Events

The YTL Centre’s events continue to provide students and academics with an excellent range of activities. Building on the prowess of our academic research and unique teaching, each event tackles a different issue and provides a platform for fresh debate on important topics.

KJuris workshops

Legal philosophy at a glance

The KJuris workshop programme covering legal philosophy has been particularly rich this year. Ten speakers, including prominent legal and political philosophers as well as rising stars, have joined us to present their most recent work. As always, the quality of the discussion has been outstanding.

11 October 2017
‘Aggregation and Risk’ by Dr Seth Lazar (Australian National University)

Many people think that, faced with a choice between saving a life and averting a headache, one must save the life no matter how many people one could otherwise spare from suffering a headache. Dr Lazar claimed that within the debate lies an underlying problem to do with a certain kind of aggregation, and asked how to apply a kind of anti-aggregationism to decision-making under risk.

8 November 2017
‘Approximation, Deviation, and the Use of Political Ideals’ by Professor David Estlund (Brown University)

Professor Estlund identified the features of the democratic deliberative system that are responsible for reducing or destroying the value of knowledge on political questions and suggested ways of improvement.

25 October 2017
‘Moral Luck’ by Professor Andrea Simester (National University of Singapore)

Professor Simester spoke on the role of luck in criminal law and punishment, and elaborated on the differences between circumstantial, outcome and constitutive luck, and how these affect our moral responsibilities.

15 November 2017
‘What was the Point of Equality?’ by Dr Teresa Bejan (University of Oxford)

In her workshop, Dr Bejan analysed the genealogy and conceptual problems of ‘equality’. In light of its many different concepts and relations, she questioned whether there was ever any ‘point’ of it to begin with.

29 November 2017
‘Property Rights for the Common Good’ by Professor Rowan Cruft (University of Stirling)

Debating whether property is a common-good-grounded system or an individualistically grounded natural right, Professor Cruft explained why property rights should be construed as a shared or an aggregated good.

6 December 2017
‘Prospective Duties and the Demands of Beneficence’ by Professor Chiara Cordelli (University of Chicago)

Considering debates on how demanding beneficence is and questions of moral responsibility, Professor Cordelli asked the extent to which considerations of both personal sacrifices and incapacities can, respectively, limit an agent’s obligations of beneficence and free her from blame for her failures to assist.

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24 January 2018
‘The Democratic Deficit’ by Professor Joseph Raz (Columbia University & King’s)

The seven most important advantages of democratic government are, according to Professor Raz, i) civil and political rights, ii) more extensive opportunities for people to engage in public affairs, iii) responsiveness to the expressed preferences of the people, iv) stability, v) peaceful transfer of power, vi) loyalty and vii) solidarity. In this workshop, Professor Raz surveyed these seven advantages, explored the role of legitimation in securing them and suggested how they can be effectively replicated.

7 February 2018
‘The New Conspiracism’ by Professor Nancy Rosenblum (Harvard University)

Professor Rosenblum reflects on the era of ‘fake news’ and why, in contrast to his presidential predecessors, Donald Trump instinctively resorts to accusations of conspiracy with such appetite and brio.

21 February 2018
‘Soft Law, Authoritative Advice, and Non-binding Agreements’ by Professor Andrei Marmor (Cornell University)

The last few decades have contained more endorsement of norms, commitments or directives that explicitly avoid the imposition of legal obligations than ever. In this workshop, Professor Marmor considered the rationale of non-binding legal instruments from the vantage point of practical reason.

22 March 2018
‘A Critical Theory of Transnational (In-)Justice: Realistic in the Right Way’ by Professor Rainer Forst (Goethe University Frankfurt)

Professor Forst developed his ‘critical theory of transnational justice’, which accounts for some of the conceptual, normative and empirical issues at stake in discussions over (in)justice.
Book launch: The Ordinary Virtues: Moral Order in a Divided World by Professor Michael Ignatieff
29 September 2017, Somerset House East Wing

The Centre hosted a prominent book launch by Professor Michael Ignatieff, Rector of the Central European University and Honorary Professor at The Dickson Poon School of Law. His latest publication, The Ordinary Virtues: Moral Order in a Divided World, explores ‘ordinary virtues’ such as trust, forgiveness, tolerance and reconciliation in local contexts and settings. Professor Ignatieff argues that, when order breaks down and conflicts break out, ‘ordinary values’ are easily exploited for a politics of fear and exclusion – reserved for one’s own group and denied to others. But they are also the key to healing, reconciliation and solidarity on both a local and a global scale. He was joined at the launch by Professor Guglielmo Verdirame, Dr Ashwini Vasanthakumar, Dr Octavio Ferrari and Professor Leif Wenar for a lively panel debate. The Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney, was also in attendance.

YTL symposium: Human rights and political wrongs with Sir Noel Malcolm
22 February 2018, King’s Building

This event saw Sir Noel Malcolm critiquing the existing system of human rights law. He argued that the UK should withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights because several of the basic methods and principles used in its decision-making are unprincipled and undemocratic.

Professor Merris Amos challenged this view by highlighting the value that the European Court of Human Rights brings at the individual, national and global levels, while Jessica Simor QC criticised the assumption that British courts would be superior to the European Court of Human Rights in defending genuine human rights. Professor John Tasioulas criticised Sir Noel’s reliance on the beliefs and feelings of citizens for determining the existence of human rights, before the questions were thrown open to a lively audience.
YTL Law & Justice Forum: Rogue states
19 March 2018, King’s Building

The first Law & Justice Forum for 2018 looked into the topic of ‘rogue states’. The speakers were Justice Kirby, Sonja Biserko (founder and president of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia), Professor Richard Miller (Cornell University), Dr Gina Heathcote (SOAS) and Dr John Nilsson-Wright (Chatham House and University of Cambridge).

The Forum started with Professor Miller and Dr Heathcote discussing the notion of rogue states. They brought up a number of important issues that such states raise from a feminist perspective. In the second session, Justice Kirby and Sonja Biserko related the issues raised in the first session with their experience as members of the United Nations Commission of Inquiry that investigated systematic violations of human rights in North Korea. Justice Kirby provided an illuminating account of a number of difficult choices he had to make in writing his report for the United Nations.

The third session was open to the public and moderated by Dr Nilsson-Wright. All the speakers engaged in a stimulating discussion with the audience, addressing many challenging questions about some of the themes that arose throughout the day. Particular attention was paid to the issue of what could be the appropriate moral, legal and political responses to the long-standing problem of rogue states, and the vexed question of whether the very label ‘rogue state’ had any utility.

YTL symposium on Global Health Justice:
Access to Medicines and Minimum Core Obligations with the Hon Michael Kirby AC CMG
20 March 2018, Somerset House East Wing

Focusing on the relationship between two vital concepts in global health law and policy, this YTL symposium explored access to medicines and minimum core obligations as they relate to the human right to health.

As part of a multidisciplinary panel, Justice Kirby discussed his work on the United Nations report on access to medicines and Professor Tasioulas presented his World Bank reports on minimum core obligations and their application to the right to health. The discussion revolved around the essential medicines to which all states should, in accordance with minimum core obligations, ensure immediate access.

Commentators included former President of the European Health Parliament Eleni Antoniadou, Professor Sarah Hawkes (University College London) and Professor Gorik Ooms (London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine).
YTL Centre Annual Lecture in Politics, Philosophy and Law: ‘Ideas of Identity and their Normative Status’
by Professor Thomas M Scanlon
27–28 March 2018, King’s Building

Professor Thomas M Scanlon delivered this year’s YTL Centre Annual Lecture in Politics, Philosophy and Law. Professor Scanlon, one of the world’s leading moral and political philosophers, spoke on the topic of appeals to identity in ethics and politics.

The core of his argument was that such appeals are generally unhelpful because they obscure the underlying reasons that have ultimate significance. In the course of a lucid discussion, Professor Scanlon covered various topics, such as reasons generated by identities that are ascribed to people and the normative significance of national identity.

He was joined the following day by panelists Baroness Onora O’Neill, Dr Ulrike Heuer (University College London), Professor Alison Hills (University of Oxford), Professor Joseph Raz (Columbia Law School) and Professor John Skorupski (University of St Andrews) and a capacity audience who probed in various ways Professor Scanlon’s scepticism about identity.

A video and revised draft of Professor Scanlon’s lecture are available to download on the YTL Centre’s webpage, along with comments from the various panelists.

Book launch: The Idea of a Pure Theory of Law
by Dr Christoph Kletzer
24 May 2018, Somerset House East Wing

Most contemporary legal philosophers tend to take force to be an accessory to the law. According to this prevalent view, the law primarily consists of a series of demands made on us; force, conversely, comes into play only when these demands fail to be satisfied. Dr Kletzer’s book claims that this model should be jettisoned in favour of a radically different one: according to the proposed view, force is not an accessory to the law but rather its attribute. The law is not simply a set of rules incidentally guaranteed by force, but it should be understood as essentially rules about force.

The book explores in detail the nature of this claim and develops its corollaries. It then provides an overview of the contemporary jurisprudential debates relating to force and violence, and defends its claims against well-known counter-arguments by Professor Joseph Raz and others.

This book offers an innovative insight into the concept of Pure Theory. In contrast to what was claimed by Hans Kelsen, the most eminent contributor to this theory, the author argues that the core insight of Pure Theory is not to be found in the concept of a basic norm, or in the supposed absence of a conceptual relation between law and morality, but rather in the fundamental and comprehensive reformulation of how to model the functioning of the law intended as an ordering of force and violence.
Book launch: Human Rights: Moral or Political?
by Dr Adam Etinson
31 May 2018, King’s Building

The YTL Centre for Politics, Philosophy & Law presented a book launch with Dr Adam Etinson’s new book Human Rights: Moral or Political? (OUP, 2018). This book brings together 30 distinguished scholars to address philosophical questions raised by the many facets of human rights: moral, legal, political, and historical. Its original chapters, each accompanied by a critical commentary, explore topics including: the purpose and methods of a philosophical theory of human rights; the ‘Orthodox–Political’ debate; the relevance of history to philosophy; the relationship between human rights morality and law; and the value of political critiques of human rights. At this book launch event, Dr Anna Neistat (Amnesty International), Professor Gerald Neuman (Harvard Law School), and Baroness Onora O’Neill (University of Cambridge) spoke about the relevance of the volume to important questions in law, politics, philosophy and activism today.

Law & Justice Forum: Human rights and non-state actors
1 June 2018, King’s Building

This Law & Justice Forum invited leading figures in the field of human rights to discuss the role that non-state actors (such as international organisations, human rights tribunals, corporations and non-governmental organisations) should have in upholding human rights law and policy.

The focus of the forum was challenging the ‘statist assumption’, which is the belief that states should be solely responsible for upholding human rights. Opponents of this view used trends such as economic globalisation, failed states, the emergence of powerful corporations operating across borders, and populist and authoritarian movements hostile to human rights, to challenge this view. This Forum aimed to explore this idea further by investigating the challenges of giving more responsibility for human rights to non-state actors.

The evening panel, held in the Edmond J Safra Lecture Theatre at King’s, was chaired by Bridget Kendall, Master of Peterhouse college, Cambridge, and former BBC Moscow and Washington correspondent.

Main speakers included Dr Anna Neistat, Senior Director for Research, Amnesty International; Professor Gerald Neuman, Co-Director of the Human Rights Program, Harvard Law School; and Professor John G Ruggie, Berthold Beitz Professor in Human Rights and International Affairs at the Harvard Kennedy School. Other commentators included Professor Stephen Hopgood, SOAS; Guillaume Long, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ecuador; Professor Robert McCorquodale, University of Nottingham; Professor Guglielmo Verdirame, King’s; and Jennifer Robinson, Doughty Street Chambers.
King’s & Queen’s Legal Philosophy Colloquium
6–7 June 2018, Somerset House East Wing

This two-day event, jointly organised with Queen’s University (Canada), featured talks by distinguished speakers and leaders in the field of Legal Philosophy.

Topics discussed included coercion, robots, artificial intelligence, refugees, rights and property. By covering these important legal grey areas, this event was able to spark important discussions which will help us find answers to some of the modern world’s most pressing issues.

The speakers from King’s were Professors John Tasioulas, Timothy Macklem and David Owens. They were joined by Dr Jean Thomas, Professor Christopher Essert and Professor David Miller from Queen’s University.

‘Belief as an affective state’ seminar
with Professor Peter Railton
8 June 2018, Somerset House East Wing

The YTL Centre hosted a seminar with Professor Peter Railton, Gregory S Kavka Distinguished Professor at the University of Michigan. Professor Railton’s talk was on belief as an affective state.

Professor Railton’s main research has been on ethics and the philosophy of science, focusing especially on questions about the nature of objectivity, value, norms and explanation. Recently, he has also begun working in aesthetics, moral psychology and the theory of action. He has a special interest in the bearing of empirical research in psychology and evolutionary theory on these questions. A collection of some of his papers in ethics and meta-ethics, Facts, Values and Norms, appeared with Cambridge University Press in 2003. He has been a visiting professor at Berkeley and Princeton, and he has received fellowships from the Society for the Humanities (Cornell University), the American Council of Learned Societies and the Guggenheim Foundation, among others.
**News and media**

**Social media**

**YTL Centre activity on Twitter**

- 332 tweets
- 622,600 impressions
- Top tweet earned 23,000 impressions

- 1,477 combined audio hits on iTunes & Soundcloud
- Over 1,900 followers

**Media**

**Brains for Brexit: top academics and thinkers put the case for ‘leave’**

*The Times*

Professor John Tasioulas is quoted in this article, which looks at the stereotypes that prevail around those who voted for Brexit. The article puts forward several arguments for leaving the EU from key academics, including Professor Tasioulas.

**Professor John Tasioulas’ reports for the World Bank**

**Online symposium**

An online symposium has been organised on the reports written by Professor Tasioulas for the World Bank on minimum core obligations and their relevance to the human right to health. Minimum core obligations are those obligations associated with economic, social and cultural rights that must be immediately fulfilled by all states. The doctrine of progressive realisation, which enables states to realise human rights obligations by means of reasonable steps over time, does not apply to this particularly urgent class of obligations.

Seven commentators, coming from a wide variety of disciplines, made thoughtful and probing comments on Professor Tasioulas’ work, including the eminent Australian jurist Justice Kirby, and the leading philosopher and public intellectual Professor Martha Nussbaum of the University of Chicago. In an extensive reply, Professor Tasioulas dealt with many of the interesting issues raised by the commentators, including the place of feasibility in shaping human rights obligations and the sense in which minimum core obligations are obligations of ‘immediate effect’.

**Big Questions: Interview on justice, privilege and human rights**

*RightsInfo*

Professor Tasioulas was interviewed by Dylan Brethour for the RightsInfo website on the topic ‘Justice, Privilege and What People Get Wrong About Human Rights’. The site builds knowledge and support for human rights in the UK by producing engaging, accessible online human rights content.

In the interview, Professor Tasioulas explained that ‘one of the most encouraging developments in philosophy is that it’s becoming increasingly respectable for serious philosophers to try to engage with a public audience’. His view is that this is changing the conversation, which in turn means that philosophers are having to take on board a broader array of perspectives. ‘The lesson I’ve learned the hard way,’ Professor Tasioulas also said, ‘is the overwhelming and the depressing degree to which human rights talk becomes another form of the PR industry’.

**Radio interview on ethics of presidential pardons**

*ABC Radio (Australia)*

During the summer of 2017, Professor Tasioulas was a guest on the ABC Radio programme *The Minefield*, discussing the ethics of presidential pardons. *The Minefield* is an Australian radio programme that helps its audience to negotiate the ethical dilemmas, contradictory claims and unacknowledged complicities of modern life.

Professor Tasioulas was also one of the guests on ABC’s 12-part series *Ethics Matters*. He contributed to the episodes on rights and on punishment. The series aired in August 2017.

**Podcast on injustice**

*Philosophy 24/7*

Dr Vasanthakumar was interviewed by David Edmonds for the Philosophy247.com podcast on her research relating to victims’ duties in the face of injustice.
Thank you

We would like to thank the Yeoh family once again for their generosity and commitment to King’s and our students. Their support has enabled the YTL Centre and The Dickson Poon School of Law to grow, thrive and take its place within the upper echelons of teaching and research in the fields of politics, philosophy and law.

Both the YTL Centre and the YTL LLM Scholarships have achieved a great deal to date. The Yeoh family’s gift to establish the YTL Centre has enabled our academics to pursue groundbreaking research and teaching, and remain at the forefront of their profession. The family’s donation has also provided financial support to the most committed and talented law students who want to take the next step in their studies. This has a significant impact on the scholars’ lives and this would not have been possible without the transformative support of the Yeoh family.

We are eternally grateful for your generosity.

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